

Thesis title: Investigating Children Welfare Inequalities in Western Africa: Natural Shocks, Family Structure and Unequal Access to Household Resources

Summary: This doctoral thesis analyzes children welfare in Western African societies, characterized by a large economic instability and an unequal access to resources among members of a same household. Exposure to high downside risk to income and livelihoods generates intergenerational poverty traps mechanisms for the most exposed individuals. Shocks intensity, life periods and the strategies implemented both ex post and ex ante to cope with risk are many potential channels for enhanced vulnerability. The first essay exploits a natural shock i.e. locust plague, to investigate the long-term impact of income shocks on the well-being of children, estimated by educational outcomes. The second essay analyses the consequences of early marriage, a marital practice still very widespread in West Africa, on child mortality in Senegal. Finally, the third essay focuses on the consequences of out-of-wedlock births, a rising phenomenon contrasting with the overall fertility decline observed in the region, on women and children's welfare.

Keywords: Shocks, West Africa, Microeconomics, Child Mortality, Marriage